

## ABSTRACT

A centralized alert delivery system receives alerts for its subscribers from various alert sources. It categorizes these alerts according to the source of the alert or the content of the alert. Subscribers pre-specify delivery modes for each of the alert categories they are interested in. The delivery mode includes one or more delivery blocks which in turn include one or more delivery actions. Delivery actions specify a delivery method, whether an acknowledgement to the alert is expected, and a time to wait for the acknowledgement. When the delivery mode contains more than one delivery block, then these delivery blocks are ranked designated as primary, secondary, and tertiary according to the subscriber's preference. The delivery method may be e-mail, instant messaging or short message system (SMS) messaging. An attempt is made to deliver the alert via the delivery actions indicated in the primary delivery block. If the alert is successfully delivered, the process terminates. If the alert delivery encounters an error, the alert is delivered via one or more delivery actions indicated by a secondary delivery block, if a secondary delivery block has been identified for the alert category.